



Wyoming Department of Education

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Memorandum No. 2008 - 132

To: Superintendents
Curriculum Directors
PAWS Coordinators
Principals

From: Lesley Wangberg 
Director of Assessment

Date: September 8, 2008

Subject: PAWS Writing Results

Information to Share

As Wyoming educators review the results of the most recent PAWS, we are hearing some concerns related specifically to the writing results. We appreciate this opportunity to address some of the concerns we have received.

WDE and Pearson Assessment have initiated a specific inquiry into PAWS writing scores. These efforts have produced some preliminary information, and the effort to improve our writing assessment will continue.

Recently, Pearson reviewed writing results for over 88,000 writing responses. That review resulted in a finding of scoring errors affecting a total of 37 students, in 11 schools, across 9 districts (listed on the second page). All of these errors are connected to a single Pearson scorer. These students' responses have now been re-scored, and Pearson will provide corrected reports to the students and their schools. WDE has contacted each affected district. The revised scores will only maintain or improve writing results for students, their schools and possibly the districts involved.

School District Superintendents
September 8, 2006
Memo No. 2008 - 132
Page 2

WDE is reviewing AYP determinations for the following affected districts:

- Campbell #1
- Carbon #1
- Carbon #2
- Converse #1
- Fremont #1
- Natrona #1
- Platte #1
- Platte #2
- Weston #7

State Superintendent Jim McBride has asked the Assessment program staff to create a Wyoming Assessment System Task Force, which will meet twice a year. He will appoint Wyoming educators and citizens to serve on this task force. The PAWS writing assessment will be included on the agenda of that group when it meets later this fall. The meetings will be open to the public.

The state's Assessment Technical Advisory Committee is a group of nationally respected assessment experts. This group will continue to examine writing trend data and provide advice to the WDE regarding the best approach for students in Wyoming to demonstrate their writing skills.

We appreciate your comments. Please contact Lesley Wangberg (lwangb@educ.state.wy.us 777-6918) or Bill Herrera (bherre@educ.state.wy.us 777-6132) with questions or concerns related to PAWS.

For questions related to AYP, please contact Laurel Ballard (lballa@educ.state.wy.us, or 777-7016)

LW: lh